

REFORM PARTY OF ONTARIO's "PURPLE BOOK"

November 2009

WELFARE REFORM

Our Values:

2. Government exists only to do those things that individuals or groups of individuals cannot do as efficiently.
3. Government services should be provided at the level closest to the user of that service, with that level of government being held accountable to voters.
6. We believe that Ontarians are overtaxed and that our tax system must be simplified, reorganized, and taxes reduced.
7. All citizens are equal.
9. We believe that all three levels of government in Canada must have unique and non-overlapping responsibilities.
12. We believe that both rural (including northern) and urban Ontario are necessary partners for a bright Ontario future.
13. We believe that a well-educated population translates into a high standard of living.
15. We believe that the family is the building block of our society.

Welfare Reform is needed in Ontario:

Ontario's economy has since the 1970s seen a huge increase in the number of Ontarians collecting welfare payments. The 1980s and 1990s saw an effort to make those who were truly capable of working, do so, by taking assigned jobs in exchange for welfare benefits. We believe that the majority of Ontarians would expect each of us to take whatever jobs are available at the time to provide for ourselves and our families, and that welfare is a temporary, last resort. Often welfare recipients lack the education or job skills to obtain employment of their choice. Often the continued life among the welfare scene in the same city can lead to career stagnation, that only relocation and a fresh start can break them free from. Welfare recipients often migrate to our largest cities, placing a strain upon the social services there. Further, the high cost of living in such urban areas makes living a challenge for people on welfare. This situation is not conducive to a good start for children in such families and environments.

Were welfare cases who are able to work given assistance to relocate to rural areas where labour is in demand, the positive economic spinoff would benefit the towns and villages of rural Ontario plus the individual. Existing welfare recipients in urban Ontario could well find good jobs in rural Ontario and afford to live in these areas with their lower cost of living & healthier lifestyle.

To that end, we propose the following remedies:

1. Change the welfare system with a programme to encourage urban welfare recipients who are fully capable of working, to resettle to designated rural communities of their choice where work is available.
2. Agricultural policy changes would see a change to foreign labour policies to accommodate the hiring of current welfare recipients into some of these vital positions.
3. Provide the necessary education and skills training to allow welfare recipients to quickly return to the work force.